

THE GOSPEL OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



SWAMI VIDYANANDA SARASWATI

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SWAMI VIDYANANDA SARASWATI

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CONTENTS

1. Preface	7
2. The Guru	9
3. Islam	15
4. Christianity	17
5. Buddha-Jesus	19
6. The Vedas	25
7. Maxmuller	28
8. Hinduism	31
9. Women	32

Preface

When, in his maiden speech at the opening session of the Parliament of Religions, Swami Vivekananda addressed the audience as 'Sisters and Brothers' he was given standing ovation and thunderous applause by those who were accustomed to be addressed as 'Ladies and Gentlemen', they felt elated that the man from India regarded all American men and women as his sisters and brothers. When it was over, scores of women walked over the benches to get near him. By the time the Parliament came to an end, he was hailed as the most popular speaker. All that enhanced the prestige of India in America and Europe for which the people of India will ever remain indebted to Swami Vivekananda. Later on, in the words of Christopher Isherwood, he came to be regarded as some kind of an entertainer. He was a good-looking athletic youth, and extremely intelligent. He was a favourite with American women.

But all that glitters is not gold. When Swami Vivekananda first met Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he crept near him and asked—"Have you seen God?" Ramakrishna replied—"Yes, I see him, just as I see you here." That impressed him at once. Here was a man who could and really did see God with his eyes, while all the scriptures (Vedas, Upanishads, Darshanas, Brahmins etc.) and sages had declared with one voice that the Supreme Being was beyond the reach of senses. He fell at his feet and like him became a devotee of Kali who lived on death. Because of this blind and superstitious faith in the Guru and the deity he remained engaged in rhetorics. That explains for too much of contradiction and inconsistency in his thought, speech and action.

In fact he himself was not clear about what he said. Christopher Isherwood, Editor of the 'Teachings of Swami

Vivekananda' writes in his introduction—"Swami Vivekananda was the last person to worry about inconsistency. He always spoke extempore, fired by the circumstances of the moment, addressing himself to the condition of a particular group of his listeners. That was his nature and he was extremely indifferent if his words of to-day contradicted those of yesterday." There is no denying the fact that his message influenced, inspired and transformed hundreds of lives. But Swami Vivekananda could not make any substantial contribution, like a host of others, either towards social regeneration of the Hindus or, breaking India's shackles of slavery. In fact he abhorred the very idea of doing anything except preaching Advaita Vedanta, wooing Mohammadons and Christians and encouraging slaughter of innocent animals.

All that this pamphlet contains is based on the material whose authenticity cannot be questioned, because that has been authored by Vivekananda's own men, his disciples and published by Advaita Ashram Calcutta. More important of them are :—

1. Vivekananda—a biography by Swami Nikhilananda.
2. Teachings of Swami Vivekananda by Christopher Ishverwood.
3. Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.

The references at the end of each passage indicate the volume and page of Works of Swami Vivekananda.

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THE GURU

According to Swami Vivekananda—"Too much faith in personality has a tendency to produce weakness and idolatory." (VII, 84).

But he forgot it when he sat down to write about his Guru, Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He said—

"Through thousands of years the lives of the great prophets of yore came down to us, and yet, none stands so high in brilliance as the life of Shri Ramakrishna". (III, 312)

Whenever Swami Vivekananda speaks of Ramakrishna, it is always in superlatives and derogatory to all others. "The light in Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Jesus was only an iota of the light in Ramakrishna". (Patravali, Vol. I, P. 187)

Swami Vivekananda put a question mark on the historicity of Rama and Krishna, when in a letter he wrote—"Whether Rama and Krishna were ever born, we cannot say with certainty. But I have no doubt, whatsoever, that Shri Ramakrishna was an incarnation of God." (Patravali, Vol. II, P. 54)

But two days before the dissolution of the Master's body, Narendra was standing by the Master's bedside when a strange thought flashed into his mind: "Was the Master truly an incarnation of God?" He said to himself that he would accept Shri Ramakrishna's divinity if the Master at the threshold of death declared himself to be an incarnation. He stood looking intently at the Master's face. Slowly the Master's lips parted and he said in a clear voice—"O my Naren, are you still not convinced? He who in the past was born as Rama and Krishna

is now living in this very body as Ramakrishna". Thus Shri Ramakrishna, in answer to Naren's mental query, put himself in the category of Rama and Krishna (two in one ?) who are recognised by orthodox Hindus as two of the Avatars or incarnations of God". (Biography. P. 66-67)

"Bhagwana Ramakrishna incarnated himself in India to demonstrate what the true religion of the Aryans is." (VI, 183). And how did he demonstrate it ? By worshipping goddess Kali, about whom Dr. Radhakrishnan says—"From early Sanskrit literature, it is clear that Kali is a non-Aryan goddess. In the Mahabharata (iv, vii) we find that she delights in wine, flesh and animal sacrifices, Gaudavaha (A.D. 700) refers to animal and human sacrifices offered to Kali. Kshudrakamalakara (fifteenth century A.D.), speaking of the image of Durga at Vindhyachala near Mirzapur, he says that Kali is the goddess of the kiratas and other aboriginal tribes and is worshipped by the Mlechhas, the Thugs, etc" (Hindu View of Life, P. 33)

Vivekananda believed that "idolatory is the attempt of undeveloped minds to grasp high spiritual truths." (I-17). "External worship, material worship", say the scriptures, "is the lowest stage, struggling to rise high. Idols or temples are only the supports, the helps of his spiritual childhood ; but on and on he must progress." (I-16)

But the fact remains that an idolator once, is an idolator for ever. This was exemplified, first by Ramkrishna Paramahansa and later by Vivekananda himself. "On August 15, 1866 the Master's suffering became almost unbearable...At two minutes past in the early morning of August 16, Shri Ramkrishna uttered three times in the ringing voice the name of his beloved Kali and entered into final samadhi from which his mind never returned to the physical world." (Bio-69)

The Ishopanishad ordains that when a man is to depart from this world he should remember and recite the syllable 'OM' (ओम् क्रतो स्मर-Ish. 17) About Swami Vivekananda, his biographer tells us—"He (Vivekananda) expressed his desire to worship Kali and asked two of his disciples to procure all the necessary articles for the ceremony. The same night he expired." (Bio-336-40). It is clear, therefore, that idolators, as they were, they continued to be 'at the lowest stage' unto the last.

And yet, Vivekananda wants us to believe that Satya-Yuga commenced with the birth of Ramakrishna and that those who have no faith in Ramakrishna will get nothing.

Vivekananda believed that "God is eternal, without any form, Omnipresent. To think of him as possessing any form is blasphemous." (VII, 411) Also, "God in the picture is right, but picture as God is wrong." (I, 47). But actually, he believed that the image was God himself. An account of his pilgrimage to Amarnath will bear me out :—

"At the back of the cave stood the image of Shiva, all ice. The Swami entered the cave, his whole frame shaking with emotion. His naked body was smeared with ashes, and his face radiant with devotion. Then he prostrated himself in the darkness of the cave before that whiteness. The Swami almost fainted. He had a vision of Shiva himself. He said—The image was the Lord himself (while according to him 'to think of God as possessing a body was blasphemy'). I have never seen anything so beautiful, so inspiring" (Bio. 270-71).

There was no consistency in the beliefs and actions of Swami Vivekananda. He believed that "the dead never return, the past night does not reappear. Neither does man inhabit the same body over again." (VI, 185) And then he wants us to believe that—

“Within a week of the Master’s passing away Narendra was one night strolling in the garden with a brother disciple, when he saw in front of him a luminous figure. There was no mistaking. It was Shri Ramakrishna himself. Narendra remained silent, regarding the phenomenon as an illusion. But his brother disciple explained in wonder—“Naren/See.” There was no room for further doubt. Narendra was convinced that was Shri Ramakrishna himself who had appeared in aluminous body. As he called to the other brother disciples to behold the Master, the figure disappeared.” (Bio. 69)

His love for Islam and Christianity

Prof. Maxmuller was a great admirer of Ramakrishna. According to him, “For long days he (R.K.) subjected himself to various kinds of discipline to realise the Mohammedon idea of an all—powerful Allah. He let his beard grow, he fed himself on Muslim diet, he completely repeated sentences from the Koran. For Christ his reverence was deep and genuine. He bowed his head at the name of Jesus, honoured the doctrine of his worship—and attended Christian places of worship”—A Real Mahatman, P. 35.

Ardent desire for beef

We give below some of the arguments advanced by the Ramakrishna Mission in the Calcutta High Court to prove that the Mission and its founder, Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, had nothing to do with Hinduism and, therefore, they should not be treated as Hinduism —

“During his practice of Islam, Ramakrishna repeated the Mantra ‘Allah’ and said ‘Namaz’ thrice daily. During this while he also dressed and ate like a Muslim. Another biographical work ‘Ramakrishna Panth’ by Ashoy Sen provides some more news. A Muslim cook was brought who

stood outside the kitchen and instructed a Brahmana cook inside made to wear a lungi, how to cook in a Muslim way. We are also told that at this time Ramakrishna felt a great urge to take beef. However, this urge could not be satisfied openly. But one day as he sat on the bank of the Ganges, a carcass of a cow was floating by. He entered the body of a dog astrally and tasted the flesh of the cow. His Muslim 'Sadhana' was now complete because no Hindu, however fallen he may be, would like to eating the flesh of a cow, and that too of a dead animal which none but an 'aghorī' (अघोरी) would do and that again by entering the dead body of a dog). All this is highly comic but it holds an important position in the mission lore. The lawyers of the mission did not forget to argue in the court that Ramakrishna was on the verge of eating beef. This was meant to prove that he was an indifferent Hindu and not far from being a devout Muslim ?" Times of India, Ahmedabad, Dated January, 23 1986.

Thus spake Swami Vivekananda

To the accusation from some orthodox Hindus that the Swami was eating forbidden food (beef), he retorted—"If the people of India want me to keep strictly to my Hindu diet, please tell them to send me a cook and money enough to keep him." (Bio. 129). That Vivekananda had no love for his motherland, is crystal clear from his following words—

"I belong to the world as much as to India. No humbug about that. What special claim can India have on me ? Am I a nation's slave ? I see a greater power than man or God or Devil at my back (that greater power has not been indicated) I require nobody's help." (Ibid).

"Swami Vivekananda advocated animal food for the Hindus if they were to cope at all with the rest of the world in the

present reign of power and find a place among the other great nations." (Bio., P. 96) "I say eat large quantities of fish and meat." (V. 402).

"Is God a nervous fool like you that the flow of the river of his mercy would dry up by a piece of meat? If such be he, his value is not a pie." (IV, 359)

"We must use the food which brings the purest of mind." (I, 136). "There are certain kinds of food that produce a certain change in the body and in the long run have a tremendous effect on the mind. There are certain foods which are exciting. If you eat such food, you will find that you cannot control the mind." (IV, 4) "To eat meat is surely barbarous and vegetable food is certainly purer—who can deny? For him surely is a vegetarian diet whose one end is to lead spiritual life. But he who has to steer the boat of his life with strenuous labour, must of necessity take meat." (V, 485) But Vivekananda should know that vegetarians have more energy and stamina. The use of the word horse-power against tiger-power makes it clear.

Vivekananda wanted to lead spiritual life. Why was he then a non-vegetarian? In fact it was his weakness which he did not defend. Said he, "I am myself not a vegetarian, but I admit that vegetarian food is ideal for man. When I eat meat, I know that I am not doing the right thing. But I won't defend my weakness at the cost of an ideal. The ideal thing is that we should avoid taking meat. After all, even animals are our own self." (Vedanta in practical life, P. 12).

ISLAM

"The Mohammadon religion allows Mohammadons to kill all who are not of their religion. It is clearly stated in the Koran—Kill the infidles if they do not become Mohammadons; they must be put to fire and sword." (II, 365).

"The Mohammadons came upon them (the people of India) slaughtering and killing ; slaughtering and killing they over-ran them." (VII, 279.80) But after saying all this, Swamiji says—"Mohammad was the prophet of equality of the brotherhood of man." (IV, 133). Not only that "The spirit of democracy and equality in Islam appealed to Naren's mind and he wanted to create a new India with Vadantic brain and Muslim body." (Bio. 79). He was convinced that "Without the help of Islam, theories of Vedanta, however fine and wonderful they may be, are entirely valueless to the vast mass of mankind.....For our own motherland a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam-Vedanta brain and Islam body—is the only hope...I see in my mind's eye the future perfect India rising out of this chaos and strife, glorious and invincible Vedanta as brain and Islam as body." (VI, 415-16).

How this junction of the two could be affected, Swami Vivekananda did not spell out. Mahatma Gandhi tried to do it in his own way and the result was the partition or division of the motherland.

"The vast majority of Hindu perverts to Islam and Christianity are perverts by the sword or the descendants of those. Ceremonies of expiation are no doubt suitable in the case of willing converts, returning to their mother church, as it

were, but on those who were alienated by conquest—as in Nepal and Kashmere—or on strangers wishing to join us, no penance should be imposed.

When the Mohammadons first came, we are told on the authority of Farishta, the oldest Muslim historian—to have been six hundred millions. Now (at the time Swami Vivekananda wrote) we are about two hundred millions. And then every Hindu going out of the Hindu pale is not only a man less, but an enemy more.” (V, 233-34).

On the one hand Swami Vivekananda says—“We want to lead mankind to a place where there is neither the Vedas; nor Bible, nor the Koran. Yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran.” (Bio-255). On the other hand he says—“The larger the number of sects or denominations, the better it is for humanity.” (Dharma-rahasya, 8). “I pray to God lest there should be unity of religions.” (Bharat may Vivekananda). “We should try to thwart the efforts of those who attempt to achieve universality in the religious world”. (Karmayoga, 32-33).

One day he (Vivekananda) spoke of Changaz Khan and declared that he was not a vulgar aggressor. He compared the Mougul Emperor to Nepelean and Alexander, saying that they all wanted to unify the world and that it was perhaps the same soul that had incarnated itself three times in the hope of bringing about human unity through political conquest. In the same way, one soul might have come again and again as Krishna, Buddha and Christ, to bring about unity of mankind through religion.” (Bio. 266-67). Why Rama and Mohammad have been left out, is beyond comprehension.

CHRISTIANITY

"Swami Vivekananda once came out in one of his angriest moods, and declared in the course of his speech at Detroi—

"You train and educate and clothe and pay men to do what ? to come over my country and abuse all my forefathers, my religion, my everything. You walk near a temple and say, 'You idolators, you will go to hell'. But the Hindu is mild. He smiles and passes on saying, 'Let the fool talk'. And if I just touch you with the least bit of criticism, but with the kindest purpose, you shrink and cry, 'Do not touch us. We are Americans (or English etc. for that purpose). We criticise, curse and abuse all the heathens of the world, but do not touch us, we are sensitive plants.'" And when-ever your missionaries criticise us, let them remember this : 'If all India stands up and takes all the mud that lies at the bottom of the Indian Ocean and throws it up against the western countries, it will not be doing an infinitesimal part of what you are doing to us.'" Bio. 126-127)

While returning to India, Vivekananda had some dispute with two Christian missionaries on the ship. They were criticising Hinduism in a vulgar way. Swamiji reached them and, holding one of them by the neck, thundered, "If you abuse my religion, I will throw you overboard." The missionary apologised to him, assuming ; Let me go. Sir, I will never do it again."

Thereafter, one day Swamiji asked one of his disciples in Calcutta—"What would you do, if some one insulted your mother ?" The disciple answered, "I will fall upon him and

teach him a good lesson". "Bravo, said the Swami," Now if you had the same feeling for your religion, your true mother, you could never see any Hindu brother converted to Christianity. Yet, you see this occurring everyday and you are indifferent. Where is your faith? Where is your patriotism? Everyday Christian missionaries abuse Hinduism to your face, and yet how many are there amongst you whose blood boils with righteous indignation and who stands up in its defence?" (Bio. 219)

But the Swamiji declares—"However beastly be their behaviour with us and however filthy be the language they use against us, we shall never stop building churches and mosques for them." (Vivekananda in India)

"They (Christians) talk so much about universal brotherhood but their belief that 'no one, who is not a Christian, can be good' exposes their liberalism and catholicity."

BUDDHA-JESUS

"Of Buddha the Swami said that he was the greatest man that ever lived. "(Bio. 269) " There were other great men who all said they were incarnations of God himself and those who would believe in them would go to heaven. But what did Buddha say with his dying breath ? None can help you help yourself, work out of our own salvation." (IV, 136).

"Buddha was God to me. He did not believe in God, he was God himself, I am fully convinced." (Patravali I, 137). "He said about himself—' Buddha is the name of infinite knowledge—infinite as the sky. I Gautam Buddha have reached that state." (IV, 136). Is it not saying like others that he was an incarnation of God.

"Buddha said—Believe no book, the Vedas are all humbug. If they agree with me, so much the better for the books. I am the greatest book. Sacrifice and prayer are useless." (VI, 40-41). Self-praise is no recommendation. And then, when Buddha, who was God to Vivekananda, himself asked him not to pray, why did he not put a full stop to prayer, whether at the Matha or elsewhere ?

"Buddha was the first man to give a complete system of morality." (VII 40-41). But if Vivekananda had even glanced through the pages of the Upanishads, the Gita, the Yogasutra (which were all anterior to Buddha) he would have never uttered these words.

"He (Buddha) never claimed worship." (Bio. 269)) "But he started a new sect just as others are starting to-day." (V 309).

And at the time of initiation to Buddhism, and even afterwards, one has to repeat 'बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि, संघं शरणं गच्छामि धर्मं शरणं गच्छामि'. Then what meaning is left in Vivekananda's assertion that 'Buddha never claimed worship.'

"I smile" when I read books written by modern people, who ought to have known better, that Buddha was the destroyer of Brahmanical idolatry. Little do they know that Buddhism created Brahmanism and idolatry in India." (III, 263-64).

"The spread of Buddhism was less owing to the doctrines and personality of the great teacher (whom Vivekananda described as God himself) than to the temples that were built, the idols that were erected and the gorgeous ceremonies that were put before the nation. Thus Buddhism progressed. But later on the whole thing degenerated." (III, 217). "The result of Buddha's constant inveighing against a personal God was the introduction of idols in India. In the Vedas they knew them not, because they saw God every where, but the reaction against the loss of God as Creator and Friend was to make idols, and Buddha himself became an idol and began to be worshipped like God." (VII 21-22).

Declaring Buddha as a preacher of Vedanta, Vivekananda says in 'Gyanayoga' that Buddha protected India by preaching Vedanta among the masses." (page 157). But elsewhere (*Hindu Dharma* P. 34). Buddha clearly says that "it is a mistake to identify the two-Vedanta and Buddhism." Vivekananda should have known that Vedanta was posterior to Buddhism. How could then Buddha preach Vedanta ?

"What was there in this country before Buddha's advent ? Only a number of religious principles recorded on bundles of palm leaves—and those too known only to a few. It was Lord Buddha who brought them down to the practical field and

showed how to apply them in everyday life." (VII-118). But in "East and West" (Page 15) he said—"Christ ruined Greece and Rome and Buddha ruined our country." "It is true that Buddha was successful in discouraging animal sacrifice to some extent, but made it a country of temples, idols and bones of sadhus." (Our India, 29). Wherever Buddha went he tried to destroy everything sacred to the Hindus." (Hindu Dharma P. 38).

Jesus-Christ—"God incarnated himself as Jesus". (Devavani-40). In 'EESHA DOOT EESA' (P. 3) he (V. Nand) says—"Nobody has realised God, said Jesus, except through the son of God (which he himself was). And what he said, was literally true." And on page 17 he says—"If I am to worship Christ, the only way of doing it is that I should worship him like God."

"Christ was an incarnation of God. Nobody could have ever murdered him. What was crucified was only his shadow, a mere delusion." (Dialogue with Vivekananda, P. 120). Evenso Christians do not have that much of blind faith in Jesus.

But then he writes—"What were those miracles and powers displayed in ridding people of diseases? Nothing but petty, absurd and despicable things. And he could not help loving these things, because he lived among such people." (Prem Yoga, P. 52); "Jesus Christ was only a human being. Therefore he could tolerate impurity in the world." (Deva Vani, P. 86); "Jesus possessed human nature like us." (Ibid. 89), "Jesus was not perfect, because he never lived up to the ideals preached by him. The worst thing about him was that he did not give equal rights to women." (Ibid. 165).

Evenso he was not worried about the Hindus joining the Christian-fold. He wrote in one of his letters—"Why should we feel disturbed if a man adopts Christianity? Let him follow the religion which he likes most."

Patriotism and social reforms

It is said that—"Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were the first awakeners of India's national consciousness ; they were India's first national leaders in the true sense of the term. The movement of India's liberation movement started from Dakshineswar." (Bio. 231) But facts refute this tall claim. In Swami Vivekananda's own words—

"Let no political significance be attached falsely to my writings. What nonsense ?" He said this as early as September 1894. A year later he wrote." I will have nothing to do with political nonsense. I do not believe in politics. God and truth are the only politics in the world. All else is trash." (Bio. 232) As a matter of fact, neither Vivekananda nor his Guru had anything to do with India. Vedanta was their only obsession.

"First and last he (Vivekananda) was the boy who had dedicated his life to Ramakrishna. The policy of Ramakrishna Mission has always been faithful to Vivekananda's intentions. In the early twenties when India's struggle with England had become intense and bitter, the mission was harshly criticised for refusing to allow its members to take part in the freedom movement." (Teachings of Swami Vivekananda).

Vivekananda said—"It has ever been my conviction that we shall not be able to rise unless western countries come to our help. In India no appreciation for merit can be found and no financial support. (Bio. 255) He did not like India because it could not give him what America could. He clearly wrote back—"Here in America I have all the comforts-food, clothing etc. why then should I come back to a country of ungrateful people." (Letters of Swami Vivekananda, p. 17) He wrote it when he was in America, waiting for recognition in India.

With a view to please the British Government he had given standing instructions to his associates not to forget to eulogise Queen Victoria while preparing any speech for him. (Letters of S.V., P. 385) According to Dr. V.V. Majumdar, "Vivekananda received so much publicity in England for his glorifying the British government. This was a reward for his loyalty to the throne," (History of Social and Political Ideas, P. 267).

"I do not bother about child-marriage, widow remarriage etc. I admit that child marriage makes the nation physically as well as morally strong." (India Women, P. 34, 53)" I also believe that child-marriage has helped the Hindus in maintaining the chastity of their women-folk." (Gyana Yoga P. 30). "The Hindus can really promot their culture by grasping the basic ideal which developed the institution of child-marriage"—(Vivekananda, in India, P. 430).

I do not know how Vivekananda, who always condemned social reformers (See Vivekanand in India, P. 126, 127, 153) could write—"But for Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya and Arya Samaj Muslims and Christians would have out-numbered Hindus in India." (Modern India, 27).

According to Swami Vivekananda, his source of inspiration, Kamakrishna saw no evil in the world. For him, therefore, the question of removing it did not arise." (Deva Vani. P. 66) In the words of Dr. Bhawanilal Bharatiya, Ramakrishna was a self-centred and emotional man. Social service, patriotism and social reforms had no place in his life. At times he would not hesitate to ridicule those who stood committed to help people in distress at the cost of their personl interests.

Swami Vivekananda was himself an idolator. He considered material worship to be the lowest stage, but, as has already

been mentioned, he stood there to the last. But, though himself engaged in idol worship, he advised others to the contrary, saying—"High or low and virtuous or vicious, everybody should worship the really all-powerful God with no physical form. Worship the one who is never born and, therefore, never meets death. Worship him alone and destroy all idols. If you want to remain happy, throw away all your bells etc. into the Ganges and worship God in men. Opening and closing of gates and with that bathing, clothing and feeding of God is all humbug-God in the idol changing dress several times, while the living Thakurs outside be shivering in cold is mockery of worship." (Patravali. II. P. 199).

While Ramakrishna and Vivekananda fed themselves with the flesh of innocent creatures, they asked their followers to treat all beings as their own self? When in one of his lectures in Shicago (Chicago) Swami Vivekananda gave a philosophical interpretation of image-worship, those in the audience ridiculed him, saying, "He is trying to mislead people in the west. No Hindu in his own country would be prepared to accept his interpretation." (Vivekananda—Charita, P. 193).

THE VEDAS

The biographer of Swami Vivekananda, giving an account of the famous 'World Fellowship of Faiths Conference' at Chicago in 1893—says—

"On his (Vivekananda's) left and right were grouped the *Oriental delegates* : P.C. Mazumdar of Brahma Samaj; Gandhi (not the famous M.K. Gandhi) representing the Jains ; Dharmapat, representing the Ceylon Buddhists ; Annie Besant of the Theosophical Society. With them sat Swami Vivekananda who represented no particular sect, but the universal religion of the Vedas." (Bio. 118).

It is clear from this account of the said conference that Swami Vivekananda was there as a self-appointed representative of Vedic Dharma because he believed that—

"The cardinal features of the so-called Hindu religion are founded on the meditative and speculative philosophy and on the ethical teaching contained in the Vedas." (IV, 188).

"To Vivekananda the religion of the Hindus, based upon the teachings of the Vedas, appeared adequate to create the necessary synthesis (between the East and the West." (Bio. 122).

Swamiji wanted to establish a Vedic College in the Matha. During discussion on the proposal (on the day of his death)—

"Premananda asked—What will be the good of studying the Vedas ?" "It will kill superstition, Vivekananda said." (Bio. 340)

“The Hindus are not going to believe that the Vedas were revealed piece meal, i.e. some portion was delivered in the beginning and the rest later. They firmly believe that the entire Veda was delivered at one time. In fact they were not composed. They existed in God from eternity.” (Vivekananda in India, P. 175).

“The Vedas are the final authority in all matters and for all times and places. In case of difference between the Vedas and the Puranas, the Smrities and others the authority of the Vedas will prevail.” (Society, culture and socialism P. 17).

“All other scriptures change with the times, but not the Vedas. All other scriptures have limited jurisdiction. But the Vedas, being repositories of universal truths have universal jurisdiction.” (Dialogue with Swami Vivekananda, P. 64).

“The Puranas contain many things which are not consistent with the Vedas. All such things should be discarded.” (V. Nand in India, P. 495).

“Our Dharma is not based on any particular individual but on universal and eternal truths. What Krishna said is accepted because that is consistent with the Vedas, not that the Vedas are authentic because Krishna endorsed them.” (Vivekananda in India, P. 202).

“Vedas are the source of all true knowledge. All that we know today can be traced to the Vedas.” (चिन्तनीय बातें P. 56). After thus glorifying the Vedas Swami Vivekananda writes—
“By the Vedas I do not mean any particular books, containing the words of a Prophet or deriving sanction from a supernatural authority, but the accumulated treasure

of spiritual laws discovered by various Indian seers in different times.” (Bio. 122).

• “I accept only that much in the Vedas which is rational. Several portions of the Vedas are mutually contradictory.”

(विवेकानन्द जी की कथाएं, पृ० 122)

“There are many verses (Mantras) in the Vedas which can not be admitted as divinely inspired because they insist on various rituals with a view to harming mankind.” (विवेकानन्द से वार्त्तालाप P. 47) .

“Some Mantras contain ridiculous stories.” (Vivekananda in India, P. 95)

The two sets of quotations given here about the Vedas are clearly inconsistent. But, inconsistency thy name is Vivekananda.

MAXMULLER

“The Swami was deeply affected by Prof. Maxmuller’s love for India.” “I wish,” he wrote enthusiastically, “I had a hundredth part of your love for my motherland. Endowed with an extraordinary, and at the same time an intensely active mind, he has lived and moved in the world of Indian thought for fifty years or more, and watched the sharp inter-change of light and shade in the interminable forest of Sanskrit literature with deep interest and heart-felt love, till they have sunk into his very soul and coloured his whole being. The Swami asked Maxmuller—“When are you coming to India? All men there would welcome one who has done so much to place the thoughts of their ancestors in a true light.” (Bio. 192)

It is an established fact that Maxmuller was an arch-enemy of India and all that belonged to her. To ask him to come to India was to invite Babar or Mohd. Gauri to invade India—our mother land. All that he aimed to do was to ruin India’s religion, culture, history and traditions with the object of perpetuating British rule and through it christianise her people. Vivekananda had already declared his faith in Jesus as an incarnation of God.

Maxmuller did not hide his feelings and intentions. In a letter to his wife he thus disclosed his object in maligning the Vedas by deliberately wrongly interpreting them :—

“This edition of mine and the translation of the Veda will, here-after tell to a great extent on the fate of India. It is the root of their religion and to show them what the root is, I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that has

sprung during the last three thousand years.” (Life and Letters of F. Maxmuller. Vol. I, Ch. XV. P. 34).

In ‘Vedic Hinduism’ published by the Madras Christian Society, Maxmuller wrote—“I remind you once again that the Vedas contain a great deal of what is childish and foolish.” In somewhat different words he re-iterated the same thing in Chips from a German Workshop’ (Ed. 1866, P. 27)—“A large number of Vedic hymns are childish in the extreme, tedious, low and common-place”. Again in 1882, Maxmuller wrote “That the Veda is full of childish, silly and monstrous conceptions, who would deny.”

The inconsistency in Vivekananda’s views about the Vedas, referred to earlier, seems to be due to Maxmuller’s influence on him.

On 16th December 1868 Maxmuller wrote to the then Secretary of State for India—“The ancient religion of India is doomed. Now, if Christianity does not step in whose fault will it be ?” (Letters...P. 378).

Glorifying and congratulating Maxmuller for his efforts, a close friend of his Mr. E.B. Pussay wrote to him—“Your work will mark a new-era in the efforts for the conversion of India.”

This was the excellent work being done by Maxmuller for which Vivekananda wanted to honour him by inviting him to India. Christianising the Hindus for perpetuating British rule in India was the only thing for which Maxmuller was being paid by Lord Macaulay and he was doing it in right earnest. Vivekananda called it Maxmuller’s love for India. And it was this love, of which a hundredth part Vivekananda wanted to have for his motherland. If that could be Desha-bhakti, what would be Desha-droha ? It was because Maxmuller had written two books on Ramakrishna.

The Gospel of Swami Vivekananda

1. Ramakrishna : His life and sayings. 2. A real Mahatman. The books were written in superlatives. To reciprocate, Vivekananda eulogised Maxmuller to the extent of declaring him an incarnation of Sayanacharya, as it were.

Vivekananda was a blind devotee of his Guru who would apply no reason while speaking or writing about him. He wanted Maxmuller to write a biography of Ramakrishna. One day a fellow-disciple of Vivekananda, Sharadananda asked him to write one himself. Vivekananda replied—"I have such deep feeling for the Master that it is impossible for me to write about him for the public. If I were to write about him, I would prove, quoting from philosophies, the scriptures and even the holy books of the Christians that Ramakrishna was the greatest of all prophets born in the world. That would have been too much for the old man." (Bio. 193-94).

HINDUISM

“From the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta Philosophy of which the latest discoveries of Science seem like echos, to the low ideas of idolatory with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion.” (1.6).

Swami Vivekananda is known the world over as an advocate of Advaita Vedanta. But Vivekananda says :—

“Notwithstanding the differences and controversies existing among various sects, there are in them too several grounds of unity—First—Almost all of them admit the existence of three things—three entities, i e., Ishwar, Atman and the Jagat. Ishwar is one who is eternally creating, preserving and destroying the universe. Excepting the Sankhyas (This is wrong—Author), all others believe in this. Then the doctrine of the Atma and the incarnation of the soul. It maintains that innumerable individual souls having taken body after body again and again, going round and round in the wheel of birth and death according to their Karmas—this is the doctrine of rebirth. Then, there is this Jagat or universe without beginning and without end. Though some (Advaitavadins) hold these three as different phases of one only and some others (Dvaita-vadins) as three distinctly different entities and others again in various other ways, yet they are all unanimous in believing in these three.” (III, 459-60).

WOMEN

"Nowhere in the world are women like those in this country (America). How pure, independent, self-relying and kind hearted. It is the women who are the life and soul of this country. All learning and culture are centred in them." 'They are Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune and in beauty ; and Saraswati, the goddess of learning and virtue.' (Bio-142).

"India cannot produce great women ; she must borrow them from other nations. Your (English women's) education, sincerity, purity, love, determination make you just the women wanted." (Bio-259).

"We shall bring to the need of India great women—women worthy to continue the traditions of Sanghamitra, Lilawati, Sita, Ahalyabai and Mirabai—women fit to be mothers of heroes, because they were pure and selfless, strong with the strength that comes from touching the feet of God." (V. 231).

To the women of England—"I should very much like our women to have your intellectuality, but not if it must be at the cost of purity. Intellectuality is not the highest good. Morality and Spirituality are the things for which we strive. Our women are not so learned, but they are more pure.

Your men bow and offer a chair, but in another breath they offer compliments. They say, Oh madam ! how beautiful are your eyes ! What right have they to do this ? How dare a man venture so far and how can your women permit it ?"

No sooner are a young man and a young woman left alone than he pays compliments to her, and perhaps before he takes a wife he has courted two hundred women." (V, 412-413).

"In the west, the women did not very often seem to me women at all, they appeared to be quite the replicas of men-driving vehicles, drudging in offices, attending schools and doing professional duties. In India alone the sight of feminine modesty soothes the eye." (VI, 491).